

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A telephone system comprising:
- a switching system for receiving a call from a calling party;
 - a voice ~~mail box~~ mailbox coupled to the switching system for receiving the call if a called party does not answer the call; and
 - a telephone for receiving the call from the calling party, the telephone being capable of screening the calling party when the calling party is coupled to the voice mailbox.
2. (currently amended) The system of claim 1 wherein the telephone further ~~includes~~ comprises first and second connections to the switching system, wherein ~~in~~ one of the first and second connections is utilized to provide a three-way call between the calling party, the called party, and the voice mailbox.
3. (currently amended) The system of claim 2 wherein the ~~three-way called~~ calling party ~~can not~~ cannot hear the ~~ealling~~ called party during the three-way call.
4. (currently amended) The system of claim 3 wherein the ~~ealling~~ called party can, through interaction with the telephone, talk with the calling party through the other of the first and second connections, and wherein the voice ~~mail box~~ mailbox is dropped from the call.

5. (currently amended) A method for voice mail screening comprising the steps of:

- (a) receiving a call from a calling party by a voice ~~mail box~~ mailbox; and
- (b) joining the called party, the calling party, and the voice mailbox in a three-way call by a telephone via a connection from a the telephone of the called party such that the ~~calling~~ called party can screen ~~the calling party's~~ a message from the calling party.

6. (currently amended) The method of claim 5 ~~which includes~~ further comprising the step of (c) preventing the calling party from hearing the called party; ~~calling party and voice mailbox~~ during the three-way call.

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7. (currently amended) The method of claim 6 ~~which includes~~ further comprising the step of (d) dropping the voice ~~mail box~~ mailbox from the three-way call by the telephone when the ~~calling~~ called party speaks to the ~~called~~ calling party.

8. (currently amended) A computer readable medium containing program instructions for voice mail screening, the program instructions for:

- (a) receiving a call from a calling party by a voice ~~mail box~~ mailbox;
- and
- (b) joining the called party, the calling party, and the voice mailbox in a three-way call by a telephone via a connection from a the telephone of the called party such that the ~~calling~~ called party can screen ~~the calling party's~~ a message from the calling party.

9. (currently amended) The computer readable medium of claim 8 ~~which includes further comprising~~ the step of (c) preventing the calling party from hearing the called party, ~~calling party and voice mail box.~~

10. (currently amended) The computer readable medium of claim 9 ~~which includes further comprising~~ the step of (d) dropping the voice ~~mail box~~ mailbox from the three-way call by the telephone when the ~~ealling~~ called party speaks to the ~~ealled~~ calling party.

11. (currently amended) A telephone comprising:
a receiver for receiving a call from ~~the a~~ a calling party; and
a voice mail screening system within the telephone for allowing a called party ~~of hearing to hear~~ to hear the calling party when the calling party is coupled to a voice mailbox.

12. (currently amended) The telephone of claim 11 wherein the telephone further ~~includes~~ comprises first and second connections to the switching system, wherein ~~in~~ one of the first and second connections is utilized to provide a three-way call between the calling party, the called party, and the voice mailbox.

13. (currently amended) The telephone of claim 12 wherein the ~~three-way~~ called calling party ~~can not~~ cannot hear the ~~ealling~~ called party during the three-way call.

14. (currently amended) The telephone of claim 13 wherein the calling party can, through interaction with the telephone, talk with the calling party through the other of the first and second connections, and wherein the voice ~~mail box~~ mailbox is dropped from the call.

15. (new) A telephone system comprising:
a switching system for receiving a call from a calling party;
a voice mailbox coupled to the switching system for receiving the call if a called party does not answer the call; and
a telephone for receiving the call from the calling party, the telephone being capable of screening the calling party when the calling party is coupled to the voice mailbox, wherein an adjunct box coupled to the telephone is not required for screening.